enhancing the public investment in the sector. The investment measured in terms of Gross Capital Formation (GCF) in agriculture as a proportion of GDP in the agriculture sector has shown a continuous improvement during the period 2003-04 to 2006-07. The plan outlays for agriculture and allied sectors have also been increased. Other initiatives of the Government of India include, *inter alia,* approval of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007, based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers, launching of new programmes/schemes like Bharat Nirman, National Food Security Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Horticulture Mission, National Bamboo Mission etc., and implementation of the scheme of debt-waiver and debt-relief, as announced in the Union Budget for 2008-09, to address the problem of indebtedness of the farmers. As a result, performance as well as growth rate of agriculture and allied sector has improved. The foodgrain production during 2007-08, as per the Fourth Advance Estimates, is 230.67 million tonnes, which is an all time record.

(c) The National Policy for Farmers, 2007 aims to improve the economic viability of farming by substantially increasing the net income of farmers. The provisions in the National Policy for Farmers for the benefit of the farmers include, *inter alia,* asset reforms including skill development to empower the farmers; support services like agricultural bio-security, agro-meteorology; inputs and services like distribution of good quality seeds, disease-free planting material and soil-health passbooks containing integrated information on farm soil to improve soil health with corresponding advisories to the farmers; credit and insurance; support services for women farmers like provision of creches, childcare centres and adequate nutrition; revamping extension, training and knowledge connectivity; comprehensive social security scheme for farmers; improving marketing opportunities for farmers through better infrastructure and effective implementation of Minimum Support Price; and harnessing science and technology for giving a boost to agriculture; etc.

(d) and (e) The Government has not received any specific communication from the farmers expressing reservations on the National Policy for Farmers, 2007.

National market regulatory system for agricultural goods

1244.SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to stabilize marketing functioning under an independent and neutral regulator to offer a truly national market for agricultural goods, transparent price and portal base trading;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, what kind of agricultural reforms Government would like to bring and encourage direct buyer producer dealings and portal based trading; and

(d) the details of system envisaged in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The agricultural marketing is a State subject and to achieve an efficient system of buying and selling of agricultural commodities, most of the State Governments/UTs have enacted legislations (APMC Act) to provide for regulation of agricultural produce markets.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Agriculture had formulated a Model Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act and circulated to all States/UTs in 2003 for making necessary amendments in their respective APMC Act for bringing efficiency in the existing marketing system and allow the private markets and development of alternative marketing channels such as direct marketing, contract farming, e-trading etc. The progress of the amendment of the State Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act is given in the Statement (*See* below).

To facilitate the implementation of amended provisions, the Ministry of Agriculture has also formulated Model APMC Rules and circulated to the States/Union Territories for adoption in November, 2007. Chapter IX of the Model APMC Rules provide provisions for Establishment and Functioning of Private Market Yard/Private Market/Private E-Market, Consumer/Farmer Market and Direct purchase. So far, the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka have notified their amended APMC Rules, whereas Madhya Pradesh and Haryana have partially amended the Rules.

Statement

Progress of Reforms in Agricultural Markets (APMC Act) as on 30.11.2008

Sl. No.	Stage of Reforms	Name of States/Union Territories
1.	States/UTs where reforms to APMC Act has been done for Direct Marketing; Contract Farming and Markets in Private/Coop Sectors	Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Tripura
2.	States/UTs where reforms to APMC Act has been done partially	a) Direct Marketing: NCT of Delhi b) Contract Farming: Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh c) Private Markets: Punjab and Chandigarh
3.	States/UTs where there is no APMC Act and hence not requiring reforms	Bihar*, Kerala, Manipur, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep
4.	States/UTs where APMC Act already provides for the reforms	Tamil Nadu

* APMC Act is repealed *w.e.f.* 1.9.2006

Crop damage due to insect

1245. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN:
SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: